

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 7, 8, 10, and 11 are pending in this application. Claims 7, 8, 10, and 11 stand rejected. By this amendment, claim 7 is amended to include the limitations of previous dependent claim 9. In view of the amendments and remarks set forth below, the pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

Claims 7, 8, 10, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0158879 ("Broghammer") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,472 ("Adams").

Among the limitations of independent claim 7 not present in the cited combination are:

audio/video appliances connected to one another in a ring shape by said optical network, wherein data are transmitted between said audio/video appliances in said network in a first data channel having a first optical wavelength and in a second data channel having a second optical wavelength, each of said audio/video appliances having an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels, wherein said first and second data channels have different bandwidths.

The Office Action acknowledges that Broghammer does not disclose the above quoted limitation. After noting this deficiency, the Office Action introduces Adams. However, Adams fails to cure the noted deficiency in Broghammer.

The Examiner asserts that Adams discloses that each of said audio/video appliances has an optical filter for separating the first and second data channels. Adams discloses each optical add-drop module (OADM) is arranged to extract or insert information on one or more channels (Adams at col. 3, ll. 13-20). As shown in Fig. 2 of Adams, optical coupler 110 with OADM 210 is tuned to wavelength λ_0 . The OADM 210, that is tuned to a specific frequency, in this case λ_0 , is not the claimed optical coupler with filters with separating said first and second data channels. As shown in Adams, each of the nodes is configured to receive only a single wavelength. In other words, each

node is tuned to a specific wavelength. In fact, Adams discloses that each of the seven optical couplers is adapted to receive one of the seven multiplexed channels. Nothing in Adams teaches or suggests how to implement a system using an OADM that extracts or inserts information on more than one channel. Thus, each of the nodes is configured for only a single wavelength.

Further, in Adams, each of the channels shown in Fig. 3 has a passband of 13nm with a channel spacing of 20 nm. There is no disclosure that any of the seven channels in Adams have different bandwidths. Thus, amended claim 7 is patentable over the cited combination.

As disclosed in the present specification and explicitly recited in the claims, each audio/visual appliance has an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels having different bandwidths. In other words, each audio/visual appliance can receive and process both the first and second data channels. For example, the first data channel is used to transport audio data from the broadcast radio receiver 3 or the DAB receiver 4 on a first wavelength and the second data channel is used to transmit IP data, for example from the DVD player 7, on a second light wavelength. Each AV appliance has a coupler 20 by means of which the signals modulated on the light wavelength of the first or second data channel can be injected on to the optical fibers of the network 1. Thus, each claimed appliance is able to communicate on both wavelengths. Adams fails to disclose this explicitly recited feature because each node is provided with only a single frequency. Therefore, Adams fails to cure the deficiency noted in Broghammer by the examiner.

All of the dependent claims are allowable based at least on their dependence on claim 7.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
COHEN PONTANI LIEBERMAN & PAVANE LLP

By /Alfred W. Froebrich/
Alfred W. Froebrich
Reg. No. 38,887
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

Dated: February 19, 2010